

hension of disaster. The Indians said that many canoes had been lost, and after I became acquainted with this part of the river, I no longer wondered at their objections to pass over it at night; for if there is any wind it becomes exceedingly rough, and dangerous for their canoes.

We found the water quite smooth, and glided on hour after hour without any appearance of a landing. I was at a loss to account for the length of our passage, until I found the tide had been against us. We at last reached what Plumondon called Tongue Point, and afterwards kept skirting the shore for so long a time that I began to have misgivings that we should pass Astoria, and began firing muskets, the usual signal of an arrival. They were immediately answered by others just behind us, and the loud clamour of about forty yelping dogs. These sounds, although discordant, gave us the delightful assurance that we had reached our destination, and might now make our escape from the confined and irksome position we had been in a whole day. Mr. Birnie, the agent of the Hudson Bay Company, met us at the landing, with lanterns and every assistance, and gave us a truly Scotch welcome. We soon found ourselves in his quarters, where in a short time a fire was burning brightly, and his hospitable board spread with good cheer, although it was past midnight. After partaking of the supper, blankets were furnished us, and we were made exceedingly comfortable for the night.

In the morning we had a view of the somewhat famous Astoria, which is any thing but what I should wish to describe. Half a dozen log houses, with as many sheds and a pig-sty or two, are all that it can boast of, and even these appear to be rapidly going to decay.

The Company pay little regard to it, and the idea of holding or improving it as a post, has long since been given up. The headquarters of their operations have been removed to Vancouver, eighty miles further up the river, since which Astoria has merely been held for the convenience of their vessels. It boasts of but one field, and that was in potatoes, which I can, however, vouch for as being very fine. In former times it had its gardens, forts, and banqueting halls; and from all accounts, when it was the head-quarters of the Northwest Company, during their rivalry with the Hudson Bay Company, there was as jovial a set residing here, as ever were met together. I have had the pleasure of meeting with several of the survivors, who have recounted their banquetings, &c.

In point of beauty of situation, few places will vie with Astoria. It is situated on the south side of the Columbia river, eleven miles from Cape Disappointment, as the crow flies. From Astoria there is a fine